Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. – 16. (canceled)

17. (new) An analytical model preparing apparatus comprising:

means for entering a shape model to be analyzed;

a database which maps at least one already prepared shape model with an analytical model and registers the same;

degree of approximation calculating means including:

means for comparing the shape elements in the shape model to be analyzed with the shape elements in the already prepared shape model and associating the shape elements with each other, and

means for calculating a degree of approximation based on the number of shape elements of the shape model to be analyzed associated with the shape elements of the already prepared shape model, and

means for displaying the already prepared shape models sequentially from larger to smaller degrees of approximation on a display screen, and in response to an instruction, selecting at least one already prepared shape model from among said already prepared shape models displayed; and

analytical model preparing means for preparing an analytical model of the shape model to be analyzed by use of information prepared for the analytical model corresponding to said already prepared shape model selected.

18. (new) An analytical model preparing apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said degree of approximation calculating means includes means for comparing an intrinsic identifier of the shape element in the shape model to be analyzed with an intrinsic identifier of the shape element in the already prepared shape model, and associating the shape elements having the same identifier with each other.

19. (new) An analytical model preparing apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said degree of approximation calculating means includes means for comparing topological information of the shape element in the shape model to be analyzed with topological information of the shape element in the already prepared shape model, and associating the shape elements having the same topology with each other.

20. (new) An analytical model preparing apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said degree of approximation calculating means includes means for comparing coordinate values of the shape element in the shape model to be analyzed with coordinate values of the shape element in the already prepared shape

3

model, and associating the shape elements having the same coordinate values with each other.